

Court of Common Council

CITY OF HARTFORD
550 MAIN STREET
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103



Good morning Chairmen Maynard and Guerrero, Vice Chairmen Duff and Mikutel, Ranking members Boucher and Scribner, and members of the committee. My name is David MacDonald and I am a member of the Hartford Court of Common Council. I am here this morning to testify in support of HB 5458, AAC Municipal Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices At Certain Intersections. Hartford has made traffic calming and safer streets a major priority for this year. I live in a residential neighborhood where my neighbors and I deal with speeding cars and red-light running that creates unsafe streets for our children. Hartford has already invested significant resources in speed tables, traffic studies, street redesigns that include cut outs and bump outs, to try and slow down traffic and make our streets safer. Unfortunately, these efforts have not always achieved the results we desire. I happen to live on the side of a hill. At the crest of the hill are the intersections of White Street and Fairfield Avenue and Linnmoore and Fairfield, all heavily used streets. At both intersections cars speed up to make it through changing lights creating dangerous conditions for pedestrians. And because these intersections are at the crest of the hill, drivers cannot see what or who is on the other side of the intersection. Last year, one of my neighbor's sons was hit by a car while crossing Linnmoore St. He suffered major injuries and faced a long period of recovery. I see speeding cars on a daily basis on these roads and I am convinced that Hartford needs more tools to enforce our laws. Our police department is already stretched very thin and increased traffic enforcement is not realistic given the other serious crimes that they are focused on. This technology has been shown to change driver behavior. Currently drivers who speed or run red lights face a small chance of getting caught, so people are used to getting away with it. Our inability to aggressively enforce these laws leads to more people driving recklessly. We need this technology in order to better enforce the law and change people's driving behavior.

My support for this bill is simple. Hartford needs more tools to help us enforce our traffic laws in order to create safer streets for our residents and children. Hartford needs "red-light" cameras to help us increase safety on our streets. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation and I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have.